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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

15 September 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

1. On Monday the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense will respond to your memorandum of September 8 in which you posed a number of questions to assist you in reaching a decision about calling up four National Guard divisions and about further reinforcing our NATO forces later in the year. In anticipation of the discussion, I have listed the principal pros and cons which bear on these two points.

2. Should we call up four additional National Guard divisions now?

Pro

a. The divisions are needed to increase our strategic reserve and thereby to give greater freedom of choice later in the year a to reinforce NATO, b to support SEATO Plan 5 in Southeast Asia, c to take military action in the Caribbean, or d to meet any other contingency which may arise in the emergent period of tension. For these purposes, they are useful either at home or abroad.

b. This action will be added evidence to the Soviet Bloc that we mean business in Berlin and have not overlooked the possibility of trouble elsewhere.

c. It will bring home the seriousness of the international situation to our own people.

d. It will give us strong ground to urge our Allies to do likewise.

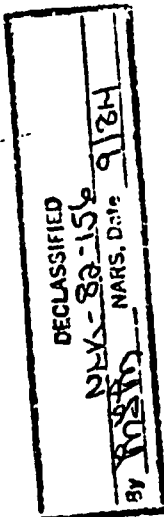
e. It offers the most rapid means of increasing the divisional strength of the Army, while permitting a progressive conversion of the divisions from a National Guard status to that of the Active Army.

Con

f. By the time these divisions are ready for deployment, there may be no place to send them.

g. Their call-up will occasion many personal hardships among the reservists, and will create political problems.

h. This increase in the military establishment will obviously cost money.



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3. Should we send 6 additional divisions to Europe about January 1, 1962?

Pro

a. It would be a major contribution toward a "ground shield" of 30 divisions, the goal which has long been accepted as the criterion of adequacy for defense against Soviet ground attack.

b. The added divisions would afford a source for limited offensive action in connection with a ground effort to maintain or reopen access to Berlin.

c. An offer of this reinforcement could be made contingent upon greater efforts on the part of NATO allies and good for a limited period of time.

d. The actual movement of these reinforcements to Europe should carry final conviction to Khrushchev and our allies that we are in this game for keeps.

Con

e. This move may cause the USSR to reinforce in East Germany.

f. We will be criticized at home for bearing a disproportionate share of the NATO military load.

g. It will be costly in gold to maintain the forces overseas and difficult to accommodate them in Europe at the level to which our troops have been accustomed in Europe.

h. There will be problems of housing and training areas to work out with the Germans and French.

i. Being without dependents, our troops will cause increasing numbers of "incidents."

j. They can be moved in a short time to Europe from the United States - so why not keep them home?

4. On Monday, I don't believe that it will be necessary to take a final decision of the question of sending the six divisions to Europe. However, a great many time-consuming preparations should be started soon if there is any likelihood of sending this reinforcement to Europe in

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the next few months. It will be necessary to decide now about the call-up if these new divisions are to be available in the anticipated period of maximum tension over Berlin and Southeast Asia.

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